



Jump Starting a Car Battery

SafeTips from the Naval Safety Center

Quick and easy summaries to find out about something new you're doing or as a refresher for something you haven't done in a while. They're a great training tool to pass around at meetings, through e-mail, or post on bulletin boards.

Most people think they know how to use jumper cables on a car's battery, but you'd be amazed how many people do it the wrong way. Follow these suggestions when getting your car back on the road.

- Check your owner's manual before jump-starting your car or using it to jump-start another car. Some new cars had specific instructions or prohibit jump-starting.
- If it is OK to jump-start, attach the jumper cables correctly.
 1. Clamp one cable to the positive (+) terminal of the dead battery. Don't let the positive cable touch anything metal other than the battery terminals.
 2. Connect the other end of the positive cable to the positive terminal of the good battery.
 3. Connect one end of the negative (-) cable to the negative terminal of the good battery.
 4. Connect the other end of the negative cable to metal on the engine block on the car with the dead battery. Don't connect it to the dead battery, carburetor, fuel lines or moving parts.
 5. Stand back and start the car with the good battery.
 6. Start the stalled car.
 7. Remove the cables in reverse order.
- Wear a pair of splash-proof, polycarbonate goggles with the designation Z-87 on the frame. This certifies that your goggles are meant for activities such as automotive repair.
- Batteries contain sulfuric acid, which gives off flammable and explosive gas when a battery is charged or jump-started. Never smoke or operate anything that may cause a spark when working on a battery.
- Whenever you change the oil, take time to

www.public.navy.mil/comnavsafecen/pages/media/index-safetips.aspx



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Jump Starts

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- check your battery for damage such as cracks, corrosive materials and loose wires.
- Make sure you have a pair of jumper cables that are free of rust and corrosion and have no exposed wires. (Never use electrical tape to cover exposed wires.)
- Make sure you buy a battery that is recommended in your car owner's manual.
- Never throw an automobile battery in a garbage dumpster or leave it in a parking lot, especially if it is cracked or damaged. Take it to a service station and have it disposed of properly.
- Never jump-start your battery if your car's fluids are frozen.
- When buying a new battery, make sure that its terminals are sturdy and large enough to allow the clamps of a pair of jumper cables to attach easily when jump-starting.
- Always call a professional if you think there might be trouble you can't handle, or you can't remember how to jump-start a vehicle.
- [Prevent Blindness America](#) offers a battery safety sticker that lists the correct steps to take when jump-starting a dead battery. To get one, call 1-800-331-2020.

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